



21 February 1958

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Dear Hack:

This is indeed a most belated answer to your long and excellent letter of 27 December and your note of 7 January, both of which reached me together. I had intended to write you two or three weeks ago but the past month has turned into one of the most hectic of the past three years. Colonel Gibbs' illness has made life more difficult and, as you are aware, this has been a period in which much replanning and rescheduling of our activities has had to be carried out. Colonel Gibbs came back to the office two days ago for the first time, and our rescheduling is pretty well completed, so I hope the pressure of work will be slightly less intense here.

Your account of the problems you have encountered in each of your Sections was of great interest. I am naturally most gratified that you have appeared to overcome, or to be in process of overcoming, all of the more serious ones. Warehouse space will, I presume, take care of your most serious difficulties in Materiel, and your letter suggests that you expect your Administrative Section to be untangled in the near future. In a recent message on the subject of T/O, we have offered you an additional administrative clerk and it sounds to me from your letter as if you could use one.

By this time, I have the impression that virtually all of your housing problems are solved, unless there should be reason for a significant increase in your strength. At the moment I see little likelihood that this will be necessary. I will say that I am a great believer in your philosophy of limiting your on-duty strength to the number of individuals who can be kept normally busy. We certainly do not want to try to force any additional positions or people upon you, and I hope the message I refer to will have made that point clear.

As you know, we are hoping for some activity in the beginning of the near future. Indeed, I suspect you will have completed the first phase of this activity by the time you receive this letter.

I need not emphasize to you what disastrous consequences would flow from any serious accident or incident. We are counting on you to

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emphasize the most exacting maintenance and the avoidance of any unnecessary risks. We have looked into the whole manner of engine performance and are satisfied that there is no cause for worry in that department. Colonel Gibbs will probably write you separately on this point.

I am afraid this rather vague letter is an inadequate reply to your own report, but we will keep you informed in more specific details through other channels.

Best of luck to all of you, and my warmest personal regards to  and yourself.

Very sincerely yours,

Dick

(20 Feb 58)

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Tuesday 7 Jan. 58

Dear Dick,

More than a week has passed since writing the attached letter and quite a lot has happened. The latest events are acquisition of warehouse space from the Navy - and the arrival of [redacted]. They both arrived with families in fine shape and are getting well settled.

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Our A.C.G. - apartments have been fully accepted by [redacted] so we are in good shape there. The fine weather continues to hold, and having some shortage of materials, we should occupy our duplex units by 31 January.

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We were all very sorry to hear about Jack being in the hospital. We hope there is nothing serious. We have his calling address and will write straight away. Best regards,

Lincoln Hawk

27 Dec., 1948

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Dear Dick,

We are just about to get over Christmas and personnel shifts and now have both feet pretty well on solid ground so will try to give you the "end of the year" status report.

I hope this letter finds you at the end of a happy holiday season and at the beginning of a year which will be prosperous and one in which your plans and desires will be fulfilled. Did not write earlier as you were abreast of the major occurrences here and I have had difficulty in assessing the situation here because of the constant shifting of key personnel. The past two months have had a few rough spots which are attributed to the absence of some of the key personnel and the fact that some of the returnees have been occupied with the task of getting ready to go home. We have made out very well and certainly can handle our operational assignments, however, we are looking forward to the New Year when we will have our permanent group here and can settle down to doing our job.

In this report I will go over briefly the status of each section and then take up an item or two of general interest. While we have no problems which seriously affect our operational capability, we do have a number of rather trivial problems which will keep us busy for a while.

Looking into our Materiel section, we find this section has suffered more than the others during the recent personnel shifts; For this reason I have purposely made no close inspection here. With a maximum of three assigned workers and an average of less than two during the past two months, they have been able to do little more than keep their heads above water. Day to day work has gone along well, however, I am sure some of the more detailed work has been slighted. We are looking forward to the return of [ ] and the arrival of replacements from Detachment "A".

[ ] will receive my ideas of his problems and then I intend to give him a free hand. He is relatively inexperienced in this field, however, he has shown much enthusiasm and a fair amount of ability. He may encounter difficulty in dealing with some of our off base contacts because of his rank. We will see how that works out and I will spend as much time with him as is necessary. My off-hand estimate is that our property accounts within the unit should be brought up to date. We probably are short very little property, however, no one seems to know where he stands regarding property accountability.

The most important Materiel problem we have now, and it is the most important within the unit, is the availability of warehouse space for our bulk supplies, packing boxes and U-2 ground handling equipment. I was surprised to find that other than the hangar there is no covered space available to the Detachment. It will be interesting to find out what reasoning left us in this condition for in this damp and corrosive climate we certainly have much justification for some sort of covered storage area. I have found the plywood shipping

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boxes are being severely damaged even under tarpaulins and because of rust on moving parts, our U-2 dollies are in an almost unusable condition. There are quite a few large items in outside storage which have never been unpacked and are probably safe in outside storage, however, we have not had a chance to go in and inspect these because of the personnel situation. The problem of additional storage space has been discussed with [redacted] the Navy Base Commander, and we expect an answer after the new year. We have a plan afoot to recondition damaged equipment as soon as suitable storage space is available. At any rate, there are a number of solutions to this problem and we should be able to handle it here without much ado. The other problems mentioned in the Materiel area will be dealt with as our help comes aboard.

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Operations has no problems worthy of mention. The section has been working effectively under [redacted] He has primary responsibility as our weather officer, however, he is working also as a (1416) operation officer; this will do him much good and will help the detachment to have him assist [redacted] Dunning shows much promise.

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[redacted] have made themselves at home readily and are well settled with their families.

[redacted] and his assistant, [redacted] make up a highly skilled team.

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[redacted] takes a great interest in the physical welfare of all detachment personnel, particularly our pilots. He has boundless energy and is always on the move. He has made himself available to the Navy medical unit here for duty as Medical O.D. on weekends and during holidays. He is unquestionably an asset to the unit.

The Lockheed contingent, although few in number, have been well selected and as a group, give their usual trouble free performance. The supervisors we have had here; [redacted] and [redacted] have both been excellent men. I know [redacted] fairly well and of course am looking forward to his arrival.

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The Hycon group have done their work satisfactorily but leave something to be desired. I was quite happy to have [redacted] and [redacted] arrive and have some of the deadwood leave. We really didn't have much here in the way of leadership. [redacted] is a real gentleman and although he moves a little more slowly than some of the others, I am convinced he has forgotten more than some of the youngsters know.

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We are proceeding very well with the camera test program. We start the flight tests this week and should have them completed by 10 Jan. if the weather holds up. I am sorry Art will not stay with us but Stan will need a good man and I have heard good reports on [redacted].

It is rather late in the game to be mentioning this but I must confess my ignorance and say that I could not believe it when I was told that we have no way of selecting the mode of operation of the A-1 system in the air; that we have no means of operating the tri-met units without also operating the 24 in rocker. This came up early in the program and I was confident we had rewired the unit to allow individual operation of the units. I realize that the A-1

is not a so called "first line" configuration, however, I mention this because it limits the usefulness of this system.

Security has the usual high calibre group. We lost a number of fine men during the recent shift, however, we received excellent replacements. [ ] is well qualified as Security Chief and seems to be exceptionally calm and level headed. I am, of course, looking forward with a great deal of pleasure to the arrival of [ ] We have no problems in this section.

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Communications-- Man for man this is the best group of communications men I have observed in the project. They are all first rate men and I have much confidence with them both as a group and individually. [ ] is a little weak on administration and doesn't push his men quite hard enough but I am sure we can iron that out if it is necessary.

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Commo has had the responsibility of seeing that the Base Public Service men maintain our 60 cycle A.C. supply in good order. I feel that the 60 cycle supply in its present condition is critical and presents one of our greatest problems. I have gone into this problem and have found that just about everyone who had anything to do with the operation of the 60 cycle A.C. plant is delinquent. I have never seen such a mess and am presently dealing with the problem through the Chief Dept. of the Navy Civilian and feel that satisfactory progress is being made.

[ ] presents another Commo problem. He is the R W man who had to lose a considerable amount of weight before departing overseas. He has returned to a state which has caused [ ] to recommend that he be returned to the States if he does not improve his physical condition. [ ] is a very inactive man and his physical get-up reflects this. I am sure he is not up to doing his work under severe conditions and informed him that he must improve immediately or be replaced. I don't hold much hope for his reform but am willing to go along with him for a while.

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Last, but by no means least, we will look at the Admin. Section. Here again is a situation similar to the one we found in Materiel: Much work of a routine nature and insufficient personnel to deal with the problem. In addition to the regular administration functions, we have had the problem of on and off base housing which has in part fallen on administration in spite of the fact that [ ] has been borrowed from Security to handle the facilities job. [ ] has been doing quite a lot of work in this area himself.

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I was rather disappointed in the administrative setup here. Everyone including finance was working out of [ ] office and you can imagine the resulting confusion. I have allotted some space, formerly held by operations, to finance and am in the process of getting the place cleaned up and repainted. All in all the section is getting along very well, however I expect to see improvements as we return to a normal schedule. [ ] has had much on his hands in dealing with the housing arrangements, etc. and has been doing a fine job.

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That is about all as far as the individual sections go. We have been successful thus far in handling our dependents. Fifth Air Force has provided the transportation necessary to take care of the family requirements until private cars arrive. The four bedroom units are coming along fine and I am betting that they will be ready for occupancy by the end of January. We have several families in the BOQ apartments, however, they have been subjected to much inconvenience as work is being done in and around their apartments. All this is because [ ] did not accept the contractor's work after the work was finished. I have managed to 'stay out of the play' and have done nothing more than state to Marty the requirements we have for housing dependents on the base. From what I have seen, Marty has been a bit childish and unreasonable in dealing with the contractor. I go along with him that the work should be up to standards, however, on the other hand I feel that these small items should be weighed and their relative importance determined before we throw the whole program out of order.

I intend to maintain good relations with [ ] and have been particularly careful to keep all of our dealings on a very friendly basis-- the result of this of course is that the dirty work has fallen on [ ] I have stated our requirements for future units on the base and have asked that he try to keep the contractors away after we have accepted the units. We should have little trouble from now on as the problem in the BOQ apartments is just about over. I doubt that we will have a repeat performance by Marty on the new units as the items he took exception to are not likely to be found in new buildings.

We have a program under way to repaint the office and shop space on an "as required" basis. The paint here does not lend itself to scouring and it is amazing how much repainting needs to be done now. I hope to keep the place in a condition that will require no additional work before turning this property back to the Navy. We have, more or less, the same plan in mind for all of our equipment including vehicles. I don't intend to go overboard on keeping equipment cleaned up, but I do believe that a well kept piece of equipment costs less to operate and is certainly much more useful than one that does not receive proper care.

All in all, we are in fine shape. I am generally well pleased with the staff, however, I feel that I have made only a rather shallow evaluation. I am looking forward to getting our people in, our housing problems behind us and everyone working at his job.

[ ] did a notable job during his short tour here as operations officer. I was well pleased with his attitude and ability.

[ ] and I went over the recently discussed problem concerning the behavior of some of our personnel. Apparently we have obtained full cooperation, however, I will continue to keep an eye on the situation.

I hope you and Jack have the opportunity to pay us a visit soon. While we have nothing urgent to discuss, I am sure we would benefit from your visit and certainly would enjoy seeing you. Please give my best to your staff.

Best personal regards--

Sincerely,



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NRO

P.S. Excuse all of the mistakes. I did this typing myself as you could no doubt guess.